A Player's Guide to Dark Castle

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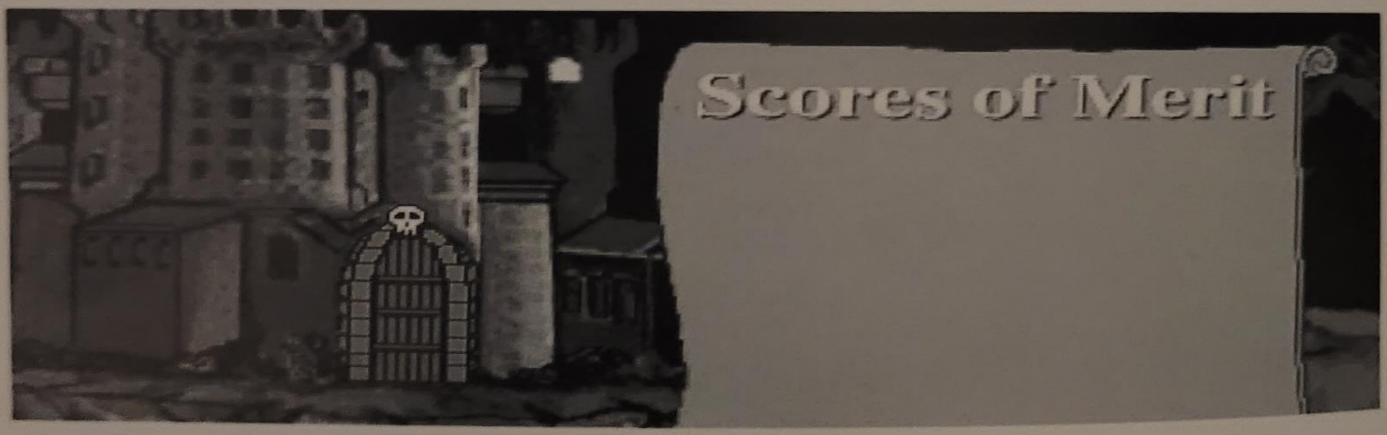
How long has it been since you began your journey to the Dark Castle? Days? Months? You've kept going by continually reminding yourself of your bravery. Now, as the drawbridge of the Castle lowers, you realize how thin the line between bravery and foolishness really is. There must have been an easier way to gain fame and fortune than by volunteering to battle the Black Knight!

It's too late to turn back now. Take a deep breath, finish writing your will, and prepare to become a hero — or die trying.

The Main Choice Screen

You'll see the Dark Castle when you first begin your game. If you dare continue, press an action button, and you'll find yourself at the Main Choice Screen, shown below.



Press one of the following buttons to begin your Dark Castle exploits:

Beginning: Click here to switch between beginning and advanced versions of the game. Beware! Few are brave enough to enter the advanced Castle, so its residents are usually hungrier.

Help: Press this button for more hints on how to prolong your existence.

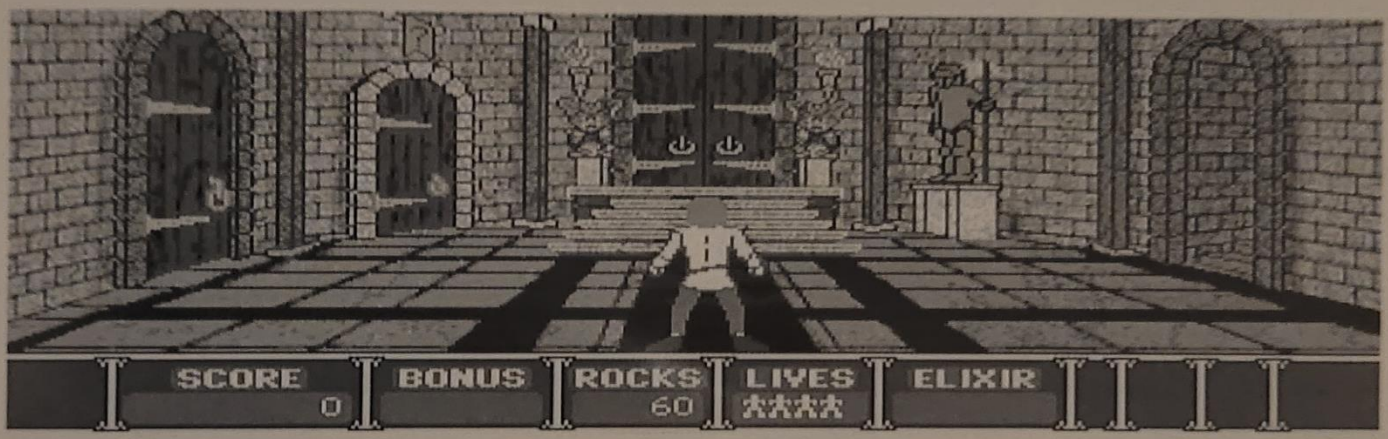
Exit: This is the place to click if you'd like to return to the real world.

Play: Press this button, and the Black Knight will welcome you into his home.

Demo: Would you like a preview of some of the adventures that await you? Perhaps a few hints on how to survive them? Click here.

Clear: Press here to clear the Scores of Merit list.

The Great Hall



By pressing the Play button on the Main Choice screen, you've entered the Great Hall. You should be safe here while you choose one of the four doors. Move the joystick left and right until the door you've chosen is highlighted, then press an action button.

The Four Game Areas

Each door leads to a different wing of the Dark Castle. You'll probably need to visit all four areas before you are ready to do battle with the Black Knight.

Question Mark Doors

Question marks hang over the two left doors. Selecting one will take you to either the Trouble or Fireball wings of the Castle. Villagers have spoken of a friendly wizard living inside the Castle walls. Perhaps he's hiding in one of these areas.

Skull Door
A skull marks the center door. Choose it and you'll be on a course to the Black Knight himself. He has little patience for the weak and unprepared. Be ready to face him and his minions when you enter.

Shield Door
The door on the right has a shield hanging over it. Rumor has it there's a magic shield somewhere in the Castle. Could it be behind this door?

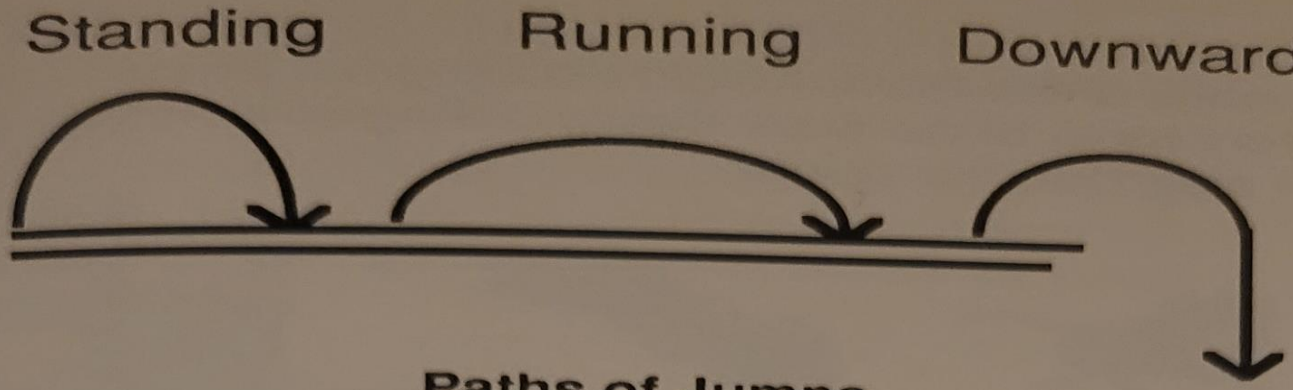
Getting Around
Once you've clicked on a door, you'll need to move fast. Reading through these pointers may make surviving a little easier.

Moving
Pointing the joystick up, down, left, or right will move you in any direction. Movement will become much easier when you learn to use two directions at once. For instance, if you'd like to go up a ladder or a staircase on the right, point the joystick to the right and up. You'll begin travelling up when you reach the ladder or staircase.

Throwing Rocks
To throw rocks, stand still and move the joystick up and down to aim your throwing arm. When you have a bead on your foe, press the firing button. Later in the game, you may find a way to replace your rocks with fireballs.

Jumping
You'll have to be quick on your feet to escape the pitfalls of the Dark Castle. Luckily, you can jump over many hazards by pressing your jumping button. There are three kinds of jumps:

Use *standing jumps* if you need to make a high jump. A *running jump* will take you further, but you'll need a running start. Using a *downward jump* may help you survive a leap from a high area. To do a downward jump, push the joystick down while pressing the jumping button.



Paths of Jumps

Ducking

You may be able to survive an enemy's attack if you duck at the right moment. To do this, point your joystick up while pressing the jumping button. After you've made a few expeditions into the Dark Castle, you may find a magic shield with which to defend yourself. It is used in the same manner, and is safer than ducking.

Rocks and Elixir

Before venturing into the Black Knight's Chambers, you would be well advised to collect as many bags of rocks and bottles of elixir as possible.

Bag of Rocks **Bottle of Elixir**

These items have been left scattered all over the Castle by unfortunate adventurers.To grab an item, just pass over it. You'll automatically pick it up.

You may pick up rock bags until you have a total of 80 or more. If you've reached this total, bags of rocks will remain untouched when you pass them.

The Castle is overrun with pesky plague-ridden bats and rats. Their bites mean instant death, unless you have elixir. There is no limit to the number of bottles you can carry, so grab all you can.

Enemies

Friends of the Black Knight wait to greet you in every room of the Dark Castle. Killing or stunning an enemy earns points:

Rat: 20 pts

Bat: 30 pts

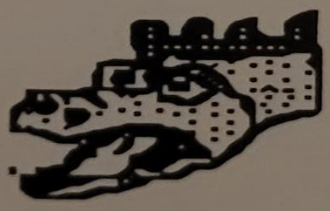
Mutant: 30 pts

Whip Henchman
150 pts

Guard
50 pts

Rock Henchman
100 pts

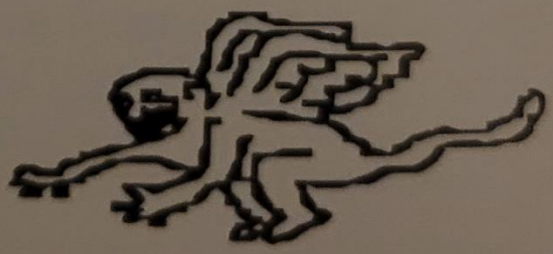
Vulture
30 pts



Dragon
150 pts

Burning Eye
30 pts

Magic Broom
30 pts



Gargoyle
100 pts

Extra lives are earned every 5,000 points in beginning mode, and every 10,000 points in advanced mode.

At the end of your quest stands the Black Knight himself. Give him a taste of the Castle floor by dethroning him and earn 5,000 points for your efforts.

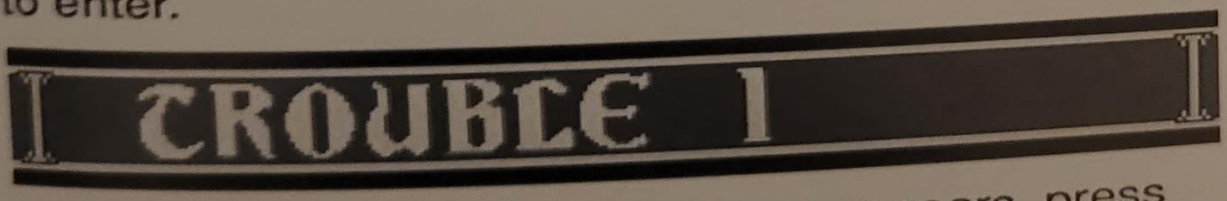
Special Bonuses

Travelling through the rooms of the Dark Castle quickly will help you earn even more points. Each room has a timer that begins counting down as soon as you enter. In beginning mode, the timer starts at 2,000 points; in advanced mode, it begins at 3,000 points. If you can complete the room before the timer runs out, you'll receive the number of points that remain.

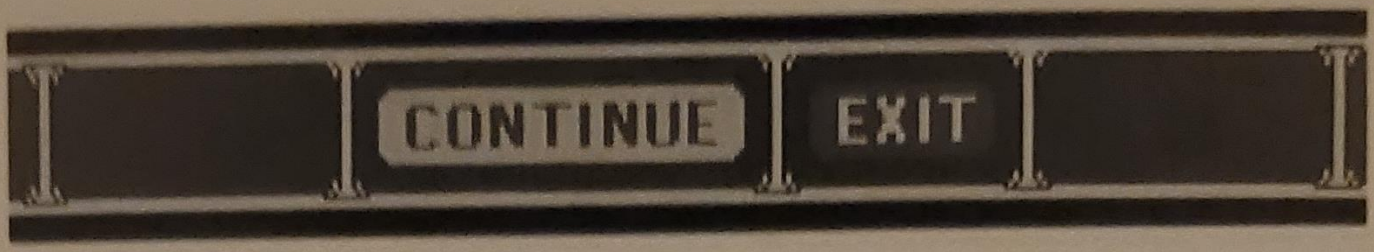
Careful exploration of the Dark Castle may enable you to find items that will make being a hero a little easier. A magic shield is available, and there is a wizard who can give you the power to throw fireballs. You will be awarded 1,000 points each time you earn one of these special abilities.

Pausing and Continuing the Game

Just before you venture into a new area of the Dark Castle, you'll see the name of the room you're about to enter.



When a banner like the one above appears, press the firing button on your controller to pause the game.



You'll see this banner after pressing the firing button.If you'd like to continue the game, move the joystick to the left and click on Continue. To quit the game, move the joystick to the right and click Exit.

Fortune Favors the Bold!
The drawbridge is open. Remember your promises to the villagers. You must enter the Dark Castle. Prepare for battle, and make sure the Black Knight regrets ever having crossed your path. Good luck!